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Montague  
College

# ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

# SELECTMEN,

AND

# SCHOOL COMMITTEE,

TO THE INHABITANTS OF THE

# TOWN OF MONTAGUE,

1867-8.

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1867-68

ATHOL DEPOT:

RUFUS PUTNAM, PRINTER.

1868.

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# TREASURER'S ACCOUNT.

	DR.
J. H. Root in account with the town of Montague,	
Cash received of C. P. Wright,	\$121 19
"    " for rent of Lecture Room,	30 00
"    " from State School Fund,	175 24
"    "    " Corporation Tax,	118 95
"    "    " for State Aid,	1381 18
"    " for use of Town Hall,	55 95
"    "    " Interest on Town School Fund,	163 50
"    "    " Tolls at Falls Ferry,	20 00
"    "    " Liquor Agency,	25 00
"    "    " School Books,	75 49
"    "    " Amount of Tax Bill,	10008 24
Borrowed of H. B. Gunn,	100 00
"    " Lucretia G. Bardwell,	200 00
	<hr/>
	\$12474 74
	CR.
By paying State Tax,	\$3500 00
"    " County "	930 00
"    " State Aid from Mar. 1, 1867, to Mar. 1, 1868,	890 00
"    " Selectmen's Orders,	7133 44
" Cash on hand Feb. 15, 1868,	21 30
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	12474 74

J. H. ROOT, Treasurer.

# SELECTMEN'S ACCOUNT.

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We have given orders on the Treasury for the following expenses :

1st. Schooling,	\$2160 46
2d. Extra highway work,	138 96
3d. Services of town officers,	384 00
4th. Interest on town debts,	776 57
5th. Town debts,	2418 00
6th. Miscellaneous Expenses,	755 45
7th. Support of Poor,	500 00
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	\$7133 44

## APPROPRIATIONS FOR SCHOOLING.

Received from town tax,	\$1800 00
" State School Fund,	175 24
" Interest on town school fund,	163 50
" from town Treasurer balance due for 1866,	41 42
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	\$2180 16

Paid School Committee,	\$2160 46
Balance due the Districts,	19 70—\$2180 16

Whole number of Scholars between 5 and 15 years of age,      372

## EXTRA HIGHWAY WORK.

J. R. Waters for plank,	2 00
A. B. Anderson for work,	32 75— \$34 75

Am't brought forward,	\$34 75
James Moore for work,	3 00
Heywood & Morrill for plank,	7 82
Silas Burnham for work,	2 25
George A. Andrews for work,	11 00
C. & H. C. Lawrence for lumber,	29 57
T. E. Munsell, "	3 50
A. Benjamin & Son for work,	8 55
H. Hudson for work,	22 00
R. H. Nims for work,	10 32
R. N. Oakman paid for spikes, railing &c.,	6 20—\$138 96

#### SERVICES OF TOWN OFFICERS.

J. H. Root, Treasurer,	25 00
J. H. Root, Town Clerk,	30 00
R. N. Oakman, Selectman & Overseer of Poor,	50 00
R. N. Oakman, Assessor,	30 00
R. N. Oakman, School Committee,	20 00
R. N. Oakman, Constable and Collector,	59 00
J. H. Root, Selectman and Overseer of Poor,	50 00
J. H. Root, Assessor,	30 00
Zebira Taylor, Selectman & Overseer of Poor,	25 00
" " Assessor,	25 00
Edward Norton, School Committee,	20 00
E. A. Deane, " "	20 00—\$384 00

#### INTEREST ON TOWN DEBTS.

Mrs. E. V. Ward,	103 22
Thaxter Shaw,	201 75
R. N. Oakman,	36 10
Peter Spaulding,	18 00
E. L. Delano,	94 13
Elijah Bardwell,	82 40
J. H. Root,	24 00
Interest on Town School Fund,	163 50
Temporary Interest,	53 47—\$776 57

#### TOWN DEBTS.

Paid Note to C. B. Aiken,	100 00
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Am't brought forward,	\$100 00
Paid Note to R. J. Rowe,	100 00
" " E. L. Delano,	318 00
" " P. Spaulding,	100 00
" " Mrs. E. V. Ward,	300 00
" " Thaxter Shaw,	1000 00
" " Mrs. Mary Rich,	500 00-\$2418 00
Borrowed of Mrs. L. G. Bardwell,	200 00
" " H. B. Gunn,	100 00—\$300 00

Reduction of Town Debt for the year, \$2118 00

#### MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES.

R. Putnam for printing,	\$28 00
Falls Ferry,	24 83
Rice's Ferry,	90 65
Joseph Clapp for driving Hearse, &c,	30 00
Eave Spout and repairs on Town House,	60 05
Repairing Hearse House,	81 75
A. Clapp & Sons for New Hearse,	300 00
R. N. Oakman for Abatement Taxes,	64 52
Blank Books and Blanks,	15 00
State Sealer of Weights and Measures,	9 50
Postage, express and stationery,	21 15
Painting Town House,	30 00—\$755 45

#### SUPPORT OF POOR.

Paid for the Town Farm by vote of town, \$500 00

#### INDEBTEDNESS OF THE TOWN.

Notes given Peter Spaulding,	200 00
" " Adaline Mathews,	100 00
" " E. L. Delano,	1575 00
" " R. N. Oakman,	500 00
" " Mrs. E. V. Ward,	1325 00
" " Elijah Bardwell,	1200 00
" " J. H. Root,	400 00
" " Thaxter Shaw,	1800 00
" " Lucretia G. Bardwell,	200 00
" " H. B. Gunn,	100 00
Due for Schooling,	19 70-\$7419 70

## RESOURCES.

Due from Deerfield for Rice's Ferry,	\$42 90
" " State for State Aid,	1158 82—\$1201 52
Amount of Town Debt,	\$6218 18
Our debts are for Town House,	925 00
Bounty,	2600 00
Town Farm,	2275 00
State Aid, &c.,	1600 00—\$7400 00

## Estimated necessary Appropriations for 1868:

Schooling,	\$2000
Town Debts,	1000
Interest,	450
Contingencies,	550
Support of Poor,	500
Extra Highway,	200—\$4700 00

## LIQUOR AGENCY.

Cash on hand Feb. 14, 1868,	\$114 85
Liquors, &c., on hand Feb. 14, 1868,	76 92— \$191 77
 Cash on hand Feb. 14, 1867,	79 05
Liquors &c. on hand Feb. 14, 1867,	95 71
Profits,	17 01— \$191 77

E. W. HUNTER, AGENT.

## TOWN FARM.

Cash Account,	Dr.
Cash on hand Feb. 18, 1867,	37 82
Cash received from Town Treasury,	500 00
" " for Tobacco.	243 25
" " " Mowing Machine,	50 00
" " " Neat Stock,	340 00
" " " Pasturing,	52 00
" " " Labor,	16 00
" " " Butter & Eggs,	35 34
" " " Pigs,	17 50
" " " Straw,	31 00
" " " Walnuts,	6 00
" " " Old Iron,	2 25
" " " Lumber,	16 00
" " of Henry O. Potter,	50 00—\$1397 16

## TOWN FARM, CR.

Paid F. D. Williams Note and Interest .....	\$112 15
“ for Stock.....	260 00
“ “ Medical attendance and medicine, .....	35 67
“ “ Blacksmith’s bills, .....	20 83
“ “ Repairs, .....	25 80
“ “ Farming Tools,.....	6 31
“ “ House Furniture,.....	2 25
“ “ Grain and Meal,.....	158 37
“ “ Groceries and Provisions,.....	122 00
“ “ Clothing, .....	86 53
“ “ Support of Poor out of Almshouse,.....	107 89
“ “ Labor on Farm,.....	54 40
“ “ Meat, .....	7 23
“ “ Sawing Lumber,.....	6 74
“ “ Sundries, .....	18 82
“ Dwight Smith’s salary,.....	300 00
Cash on hand Feb. 15, 1868,.....	72 17
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	\$1397 16

## INVENTORY

Of the Town Farm property, February 15, 1868.

Real Estate,	4200 00
Live stock, 1 Horse,	150 00
3 Cows,	175 00
6 Heifers,	275 00
5 Swine,	40 00
25 Hens,	10 00-\$650 00
Produce and Provisions :	
9 tons Hay,	135 00
35 Bush. Corn,	50 00
24 “ Rye,	36 00
5 “ Oats,	4 00
50 “ Potatoes,	45 00
3 “ Beans,	10 00
550 lbs. Pork,	80 00
75 “ Lard,	8 00
200 “ Beef,	16 00
1 bbl. Vinegar,	8 00-\$392 00

Amount brought forward,	392 00
House furniture,	275 00
Farming tools,	330 00
Due from State for support of N. Hartson,	120 00
Cash on hand,	72 17
Total inventory,	\$6 089 17
Borrowed in 1866, and not paid,	200 00
Net inventory,	\$5889 17

#### SUPPORT OF POOR.

Inventory of 1867 less the \$300 borrowed,.....	\$6107 82
"    " 1868,.....	5889 17
Deficiency,.....	\$218 65
Paid from town Treasury for support of Poor,.....	\$500 00
"    "    "    " interest on Farm debt,...	298 00
Interest on the \$850 received for first farm,.....	51 00
Taxes on Farm property,.....	49 59
	_____
	\$1117 24
Final loss on Tobacco,.....	156 75
	_____
Actual cost of supporting Poor,.....	\$960 49
Paid for Poor out of Almshouse,.....	107 89
Cost of supporting Poor at Almshouse,.....	\$852 60

We have furnished 352 weeks' board, which will make the weekly cost of boarding, clothing, nursing and doctoring the inmates of the Almshouse \$2.42.

R. N. OAKMAN,     } Selectmen and  
J. H. ROOT,         } Overseers of  
ZEBINA TAYLOR,    } the Poor.

## SCHOOL COMMITTEE'S REPORT.

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The School Committee in presenting their Annual Report, deviate somewhat from the usages of former years, speaking only of the schools as a whole, making no comparisons, and abstaining from personal criticisms of teachers. We adopt this course partly for the reason that many of the Winter schools have not closed at the writing of this report, and we could hardly do equal justice to each were we to report each school separately. And besides, your committee can see no reason for presenting the public with a table of the excellencies and defects of the various teachers employed in the town, no advantages to be gained, no truth to be served. The public suffer no loss by such a course on our part, while the teachers are relieved of the anxiety and fear of a public exposure, and the odium of a public condemnation. Not all have been alike successful; not all have met in equal degree the approval of the committee, and to speak justly of each would be needlessly to afflict, where no good could possibly result.

Committees are fallible as well as teachers. They do not always understand all the requisites of a good school, or appreciate as fully as they might the difficulties of the teachers' position. They are liable to err in the presentation of criticisms upon the teachers and schools under their care, misjudging and censuring, where, if the whole truth were known, their opinions would be entirely reversed. In this way, very often an irreparable injury is inflicted, and the hopes of some struggling life most cruelly blighted. If we err at all, far better err on the side of silence, for none are wronged where no comparisons are made, and no criticisms indulged.

The past year has been one of general success and prosperity to our schools, and we regard this as the result, more or less direct, of the action of the town at our last annual meeting in respect to hiring teachers.

We have, so far as practicable, retained\* in the several schools those teachers who had in former years, exhibited tact, talent and ability in teaching; believing that our schools had in former years suffered greatly from a too frequent change of teachers. The teacher who goes into a strange school for the first time, has many preliminaries to learn. She has to become familiar with the names of her pupils, to make herself acquainted with their attainments, before she can arrange them in classes; and what is often more difficult, she has to learn the disposition and temper of each, and establish her authority as mistress. She has to overcome the distrust, and gain the confidence of the timid, while the mischievous and unruly must test her power to govern, before they are sure they may not indulge a little, their wayward proclivities. In this way a part of each successive term is little less than wasted in the reconstruction of the school, which after all, is too often based on something like a compromise between the half controlled scholars and the doubtfully established authority of the teacher.

This is all avoided when the tried and successful teacher returns to her school for another term. She meets the familiar, smiling faces of her former pupils, who greet her with a pleasant welcome, and then quietly take their places in the school-room, unconsciously yielding to an authority, which, though it may be absolute, has been so wisely used as scarcely to be felt. An hour or two passes, and teacher and scholars assume their proper positions, the lessons are resumed, and the vacation has proved not a harsh interruption, but a pleasant recreation from study.

The character of a school is determined very much by the teacher. A good teacher will generally secure a good school. What she is, to a great extent, the scholars will become. Her very eye, and tone of voice, will awaken their interest and zeal, and enliven every recitation. Is she full of life and energy in teaching? So are they in learning. Is she accurate in scholarship? So are they

in recitation. Is she respectful in her bearings towards them? So are they towards her. Whatever goes to constitute the sum of her excellence, will be measurably repeated in them. The ability to touch the hidden springs of thought and feeling, to interest as well as occupy the mind, is indeed a difficult attainment but has been attained by many in some good degree, and is of indispensable importance, especially in the instruction of the younger scholars. It does more than all things else to prevent restiveness and disorder, and insure the highest progress. And the professed instructors, who content themselves with merely hearing lessons, without aiming, by previous study, and by practical illustrations and tests, to make them understood and appreciated by the pupils, may well consider the question whether they have not sadly mistaken their calling.

The proper government of our schools is intimately connected with their present prosperity, and the future well-being of society. The will of the teacher, enforced by discretion and kindness as well as authority, must have the ascendant, or nothing will be done to advantage, and the school itself will be worse than useless. The spirit of disobedience to wholesome rule, allowed in the school room, will prepare children to become rebels against the laws of the State, and pests in the community. Children should early be taught the lesson of obedience,—the cheerful submission of their wills to the will of those who are their superiors in wisdom and authority. The method of securing proper discipline is as far removed from harshness, as from over-indulgence. It is of the utmost importance that the teacher, while maintaining her authority, should feel, and convince the pupil that she feels an earnest interest in their welfare and success. She should maintain dignity, and self-control, and treating them with uniform courtesy and kindness, avoid expressions of ill-humor and fretfulness, as that which tends directly to repel and alienate their minds from her and their studies. The true teacher governs rather by force of mind and character, than by physical effort. Some few scholars, it is true, may not be controlled by any array of mental and moral influences, and require the infliction of a prompt and adequate bodily chastisement.

The child that cannot be persuaded to do its duty through the gentle solicitations of affection, should be made to, by the stern application of the rod. No safe substitute for it, in certain cases, has been discovered since the days of Solomon. This rod, however, is to be administered without the least vindictiveness, as a painful duty—rather “in sorrow than in anger”—as essential to the benefit of the offender, and the prevention of the direful effects upon the school of unrepressed misrule. One of the best lessons which the young can learn is the lesson of obedience and submission to law, a lesson which, above all others, the generation now coming forward into life should learn.

We wish to say a word upon the subject of school architecture. We care not so much for the exterior of our school buildings, as for the arrangement and adaptation of the interior for convenience, comfort, health and pleasantness. It is easy to see that a school kept in a room not easy of access, not large enough, not convenient for the recitations of the classes, nor for the care of clothing &c., hard to keep clean, low between joints, dark and gloomy, would be a school laboring under difficulties. Whatever is gained in such a room is indeed gained; but how much every scholar fails to gain! The requisites of a good school-room are, sufficient size, sufficient ante-rooms, good height, plenty of light, arrangement for perfect ventilation without discomfort or danger to the scholar, enough warmth, comfortable seats and a generally pleasant, and cheerful aspect. Let each room be properly supplied with maps, charts, mottoes, &c. Make it attractive and inviting to the scholar, and take away everything which shall act as a hindrance and obstacle, and we will guarantee that there will not be so many backward scholars and truants as now. Of the above requisites of a good school-room, ventilation is one, important enough to constitute a separate topic of remark in every school report. Pure air is of absolute necessity to health and clear-headedness in the school-room. Every intelligent person knows that we consume the oxygen of the air of every breath we draw, and breathe out nitrogen, which is simply neutral as to any power of sustaining life, and carbonic acid, which inhaled again, is deadly poison. Ev-

ery school-room needs, then, some arrangement by which the atmosphere shall be renewed as fast as breathed. There should be ventilators so arranged as to constantly carry off the bad air and supply fresh. And teachers should know how to employ them, and keep them open in all ordinary weather.

It has long been our hope that Vocal Music and Gymnastics might be regularly taught in all the Public Schools, and we have been highly gratified in witnessing these exercises in some of the schools the past year. The question may be asked, of what practical importance are these exercises? In our opinion they have an important bearing in several respects. First, they are conducive to health; and whatever tends to expand the lungs, to give vigor and elasticity to the limbs, to quicken the sluggish blood is well calculated to prepare the mind for greater and more persistent effort. Do we not all know that our ability or inability in scientific research depends very much upon the health of the body? Have we an aching brow or a muddled brain, we may persevere in our efforts, but slow indeed will be our progress. Secondly, they assist the teacher in governing her school.

It is said that idleness is the parent of vice. In no place is this truth more plainly demonstrated than in the school-room. The moment a child is out of business assigned it by the teacher, it will have business of its own, which is very apt to be detrimental to his intellectual and moral culture. Neither his physical nor literary progress demands or will allow him to sit upright with eyes riveted upon a book one hour and a half four times a day. It is tyranny to impose such a burden. No kind and considerate teacher will exact it. But if she will intersperse the studies and tasks of each quarter-day with a good school song and appropriate exercises, it will afford amusement, give relaxation to the strained nerve, occupy the time which might be otherwise worse than uselessly employed, besides adding new vigor to both mind and body. Heretofore, if used at all, it has been used as a recreation to the scholars, and generally, a few of the best singers have been selected to do all the singing.

It is not the popular idea that nearly every child may learn to

sing ; but many of the most intelligent musicians affirm it. The same organs that produce the wail of the infant, and the delicate inflections of good reading, may be cultivated to execute the most touching cadences of song. A good reader is possessed of nice perception, and capability of execution. He is an apt imitator ; and what is more, a “natural” singer. Why is it not argued that only natural readers should be taught to read ? If then, nearly every one may learn something of music to profit—say as many as may become fair readers—is it not our duty to give all the scholars of the Public Schools an equal privilege in gaining a knowledge of its principles?

We believe there is great need of parental co-operation, that our schools may become what we all desire them to be. It is indispensable that children should be taught at home, that obedience to teachers and a strict compliance with all the regulations of the school, are duties which must not be neglected ; and scholars should be sent to school not only with the negative injunction that they “must not be naughty,” but with the positive precept, “be good.”

Parents should insist upon promptness and regularity in their children, and permit nothing of an ordinary character to interrupt the constancy of their attendance upon their daily school duties. They should also endeavor to cultivate a feeling of love in their children for the school room. This may be done by impressing upon their minds the design and importance of schools and the value of the knowledge acquired thereby ; and in cases where it is practicable, endeavor to assist them in their studies at home.

Parents should never threaten to send their disorderly children to school as a prison, to suffer a penalty, for in such a case the school-room bears the air of oppression and punishment, rather than a retreat of pleasure and profit.

We would also urge upon parents the importance of frequently visiting the school-room. You would not employ a person to do any other work for you without attending to the way in which it was done. Do you say that you are unable to judge in this manner ? But you do judge from hearsay, and could you not much better, and perhaps more correctly, judge from personal observation ?

And besides this, it would greatly encourage the teacher, and make her feel that you were really interested in what she was doing; that you regarded her work of some importance; it would inspire her with new energy and devotion.

And again, it would have a most happy influence upon the scholars. They are apt to be interested in what interests their parents. And for you thus to manifest sympathy in their daily work, seems to give dignity and importance to their tasks. Hence, as a general rule, we find the best scholars in the schools most frequented by parents.

The committee close their annual report by expressing the hope that the Public Schools of Montague, by the blessing of God, may in future enjoy uninterrupted and increased prosperity.

E. A. DEANE,  
R. N. OAKMAN,  
EDWARD NORTON, } Superintending  
                         } School Com.

Montague, Feb. 17, 1868.



